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ABSTRACT

This paper provides a selected review of political candidate campaign advertising studies from the political science, mass communication, advertising, and political communication literature. The paper examines the literature in terms of research pertaining to (1) candidate advertising content (commercials for male versus female candidates and for incumbents versus challengers, issue versus image orientations, and negative advertising); (2) viewer variables; (3) historical analyses of specific campaigns; and (4) methodologies employed and variables examined in these studies. On the basis of this analysis, the paper advances 10 recommendations for future research. Eighty references are attached. (SR)

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POLITICAL CANDIDATE CAMPAIGN ADVERTISING: A SELECTED REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper was to provide a selected review of political candidate campaign advertising studies from the political science, mass communication, advertising, and political communication literature. More specifically, this literature was examined in terms of research pertaining to (a) candidate advertising content (e.g., commercials for male versus female candidates and for incumbents versus challengers, issue versus image orientations, negative advertising); (b) viewer variables; (c) historical analyses of specific campaigns; and (d) methodologies employed and variables examined in these studies. On the basis of this analysis, recommendations for future research were advanced.

POLITICAL CANDIDATE CAMPAIGN ADVERTISING: A SELECTED REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

According to Kaid (1981), political advertising may be defined as "the communication process by which a source (usually a political candidate or party) purchases the opportunity to expose receivers through mass channels to political messages with the intended effect of influencing their political attitudes, beliefs, and/or behaviors" (p. 250). Inherent within this definition is the potential manipulation of content to secure a desired effect. Over the past 25 years, considerable research has been conducted to determine the effects of various types of message content in political commercials. This paper will review studies from the political science, mass communication, advertising, and political communication literature pertaining in particular to broadcast advertising for political candidates engaged in election campaigns. This review will consider this literature in four broad categories: (a) advertising content (e.g., commercials of male versus female candidates, incumbent versus challenger advertising, negative advertising, content length, issue versus image orientations); (b) viewer variables; (c) historical analyses of specific candidate advertising campaigns; and (d) methodologies employed and variables studied in candidate advertising research.

According to Devlin (1986), political candidate commercials serve a variety of purposes: (a) they make an unknown candidate known; (b) they can be aimed in particular at affecting the political cognitions of late-deciding or uninterested voters, often a critical segment of the voting population in determining election outcomes; (c) they reinforce supporters and partisans in their political choices; (d) they can attack opponents; (e) they develop and explain issues, in particular through a cumulative effect; (f) they can soften or redefine a candidate's image; (g) they can target specific demographic groups; (h) they can raise campaign funds through their use of financial appeals; (i) they can be revised or discarded as the campaign progresses; and (j) they are used because the opponent uses them.

Conti (1987) in particular noted three principles applicable to presidential campaign advertisements. First, given the nature of the office, a presidential candidate's character is a primary consideration. Second, presidential candidate advertisements must address a contender's personal and political history. Third, these advertisements act as responses to political situations, with certain types of advertisements evolving and decaying historically through individual campaigns.

Several researchers have developed political candidate advertising typologies. Combs (1979) described the most

familiar type of political advertisement as one which associates the candidate with national political mythology, "embracing patriotic and political-cultural values, exploiting the 'log cabin' myth, and using war hero symbols" (p. 336). The latter may be achieved through documentary form. Similarly, demonstrations of "democratic communication" may be illustrated through real life settings utilizing a cinema verité style, with a candidate informally talking with and listening to ordinary people.

Another advertising form described by Combs (1979) projects an "image of omnipotence," often implying that the candidate has magical powers. Other political advertisements, contends Combs, "position" a candidate in a particular political milieu. Finally, these advertisements may appeal to primal myths, according to Combs, such as through feal appeals implied in negative political advertisements.

Diamond and Bates (1984) distinguished among four types of political candidate advertisements, each associated typically with a progressive phase in a campaign. First, "ID spots" are shown early in a campaign to engender candidate name identification. Second, "argumentation spots" present candidate positions on issues. Third, "attack spots" reflect negative advertising targeted at an opponent. And, fourth, "I see an America spots" entail visionary appeals.

Finally, Joslyn (1986) described four types of political

candidate advertisements, reflective of major approaches to election campaigns in general. The first of these, prospective policy choice appeals, places an emphasis on candidate revelations of "future-oriented public policy promises that are specific, detailed, and distinctive" (p. 142). The second type, retrospective policy satisfaction appeals, "provide an opportunity for the public to evaluate past policy performance and to reward or punish incumbent parties and candidates" (p. 150). This process is encouraged by candidates in their commercials through "credit claiming," "blame-placing," or by raising an issue drawing attention to a concern which needs corrective action. The third type of political advertisement, benevolent leader appeals, has centered historically, according to Joslyn, around six clusters of candidate traits: compassion, empathy, integrity, activity level, strength, and knowledge. The final category of political advertisement, election-as-ritual appeals, entails commercials which articulate vague, ambiguous policy preferences, ones which offer elements of melodrama in providing a story about the candidate or the campaign, and ones in which contenders employ "positively valued icons of the American political culture to their advantage" (p. 176).

Content of Candidate Advertisements

Sex of the Candidate

Kaid, Myers, Pipps and Hunter (1984) tested reactions

to male and female political contenders in six advertising settings (two associated with females, two with males, and two which could be considered neutral). They found that (a) the female was the recipient of very favorable reactions when compared to a male in the identical setting; (b) the highest rating for the female occurred in a setting typically associated with a male (the "Hard Hat" spot); (c) the female contender was the least successful in advertisements placed in what might be called "female" settings; and (d) the female was not at a disadvantage in the neutral settings.

In a study of 113 30-second television advertisements representing 23 male and 23 female candidates engaged in House, Senate, and state-wide races, Benze and Declercq (1985) noted that (a) females were slightly more likely to attack the opponent's issue stands; (b) males were more likely to attack the opponent's personality or performance; (c) males stressed toughness in their advertisements three times more frequently than the females; (d) females stressed compassion and warmth in their advertisements twice as often as the males; (e) females did not stress their competence and experience more often than did the males; and (f) males did not stress their performance more than the females.

Wadsworth et al. (1986) examined the use of "masculine" versus "feminine" strategies by female political candidates in their campaign advertisements. Students were exposed to various female "candidate" commercials produced by the

researchers utilizing various "masculine" or "feminine" strategies. Results of the study indicated that an "aggressive" strategy worked more effectively than a "nonaggressive" strategy and a "career" strategy worked more effectively than a "family" strategy, while no differences were noted between an "ambitious" and a "nonambitious" strategy.

Procter, Aden and Japp (1987) conducted an analysis of candidate advertisements in the first gubernatorial race between two women--in this case, neither an incumbent. On the basis of their analysis, the researchers concluded that: (a) the winning candidate was able to blend traditional female qualities and symbols of incumbency, generating the image of a "compassionate leader"; (b) the advertisements of the winning candidate were on the air first, and because they were effective, they likely gave her momentum; and (c) the winning candidate was able to effectively blend incumbent and challenger strategies and images, making her counterpart defend herself, conveying messages of experience, and utilizing visual backgrounds appropriate for an incumbent.

Incumbents vs. Challengers

Kaid, Foote and Wadsworth (1984) examined the 1976 and 1980 Jimmy Carter campaign commercials to contrast the use of incumbent and challenger advertisements. Among their

findings were the following: (a) Carter's 1980 commercials were noticeably lacking in negative attacks or themes; (b) issues were more emphasized in the incumbent commercials than in the challenger commercials; (c) in 56% of the incumbent commercials Carter's trustworthiness was emphasized, his competence in 50% of them, while in 45% of the challenger commercials his trustworthiness was emphasized; (d) in 70% of his 1980 commercials the White House "advantage" was stressed; (e) in 75% of his 1976 commercials, Carter advocated change, while in 1980, 40% of his incumbent commercials did so; (f) 25% of the 1976 Carter commercials attacked the incumbent president; (g) Carter spoke to the camera head-on in more than twice as many commercials in 1976 than in 1980; (h) Carter spoke in only half of his 1980 commercials and relied upon an announcer in almost three times as many of his commercials in 1980 as in 1976; (i) Carter utilized outdoor settings more frequently in his challenger commercials but appeared in as many as 63% of his incumbent commercials in formal indoor settings. Finally, in contrast with the Kaid and Davidson (1984) study, this research demonstrated that the challenger used longer commercials than the incumbent.

In a subsequent study of 51 challenger and 24 incumbent commercials involving Nixon in the 1968 and 1972 presidential campaigns and Carter in the 1976 and 1980 presidential campaigns, Kaid, Wadsworth and Foote (1985) found that:

(a) the incumbent was more likely to rely on the "trappings" of his office in his commercials, emphasized the "legitimacy" of the presidency more often than his counterpart, and was more likely to be shown with world leaders in the commercials; (b) the incumbent stressed his accomplishments, relied on documentaries, introspection, and dramatization of issues in the commercials; (c) the challenger tended to call for change and took the offensive position in his commercials; and (d) the challenger employed introspection and focused on the opposition in his commercials.

In a study of 55 television candidate commercials from three 1982 Senate races involving Republican incumbents and Democratic challengers, Kaid and Davidson (1986) found that incumbents employed longer and more candidate-positive focused commercials, more testimonials, more slides with print, and more formal dress. In addition, the incumbents emphasized their competence both verbally and nonverbally in their commercials and incorporated the use of an announcer or other voices in them. In contrast, challengers featured more opposition focus in their commercials, as well as more cinema verité style, more "candidate head-on" style, more frequent eye contact, and more casual dress. Furthermore, the challengers did not utilize surrogates as much in their commercials to speak on their behalf.

Finally, Wadsworth and Kaid (1987) conducted an in-depth analysis of incumbent and challenger commercials of the

1952-1984 presidential campaigns. The 805 campaign commercials were coded by verbal, nonverbal, and production component categories, including commercial format, rhetorical style, type of appeals, setting and staging, and production techniques. On the basis of their analysis, the researchers concluded that: (a) winning or successful incumbents employed tactics which enhanced their image as the individual who belonged in the office of the president; and (b) challengers were most successful when they challenged the incumbent's past performance and policies and called for change. More specifically, incumbents employed: (a) more testimonials and opposition focused formats; (b) an emotional rhetorical style; (c) more emotionally based and source credibility based appeals; (d) a focus on personality traits; (e) cinema verité styles more often than their counterparts; (f) an anonymous announcer and music more frequently; (g) less direct eye contact with the camera; and (h) an emphasis on their accomplishments and competence. In contrast, challengers utilized: (a) more introspection and question-and-answer formats; (b) an informational rhetorical style; (c) more logical appeals and issue-related focus than their counterparts; (d) more candidate head-on technique; (e) more direct eye contact with the camera; and (f) more calls for change and attacks upon the opponent's record.

Negative Advertisements

In a study of direct reference political advertising through telephone interviews, Surlin and Gordon (1977) found that lower socio-economic status respondents felt these advertisements were more unethical but more informative than did the middle socio-economic status respondents, and that blacks found these attacking advertisements more informative and effective than did whites.

Through a series of telephone interviews with 211 mid-Michigan voters in the final week of the 1982 congressional campaign, Garramone (1984) found that: (a) only 10% evaluated the negative campaign commercials as "very" truthful, 54% felt they were "somewhat" truthful, and 36% believed they were "not at all" truthful; (b) only 4% of the voters reported becoming more positive as a result of the negative commercials, while 40% reported becoming more negative toward the sponsoring candidate, suggesting a backlash effect; (c) 10% of the voters became more positive toward the target of the advertisements, while 15% became more negative, with 75% perceiving no change; (d) almost 75% of the voters expressed disapproval of negative political commercials, while 19% expressed approval of them; (e) perceived truthfulness of these commercials was related to favorable affect toward their sponsors and toward the practice of negative advertising and negatively related to favorable affect toward their targets; (f) more favorable

affect toward the sponsor was related to approval of the practice, while more favorable affect toward the target was related negatively to approval of the practice.

Garramone (1985) examined the role of sponsorship and rebuttal in the impact of negative advertising upon candidate perceptions and intentions, finding that: (a) viewers of an independently sponsored commercial targeted at an opponent perceived the opponent more negatively (and the candidate involved more favorably), with concommitant effects on voting intentions; and (b) with the addition of an opponent rebuttal, subjects perceived the opponents more negatively and were less likely to vote for them.

On the basis of an analysis of 1984 senatorial campaign advertisements, Gronbeck (1985) identified three types of negative advertisements employed by political candidates: (a) the implicative ad, involving an implication or innuendo about the opponent but no direct attack, unless it is quickly slipped in through phrases such as "unlike my opponent"; (b) the comparative ad, incorporating an explicit comparison between the contenders; and (c) the assaultive ad, the most risky, providing a direct, personal attack on the opponent's character, motives, associates, or actions, usually with little or no comparison to the originator of the advertisement. Gronbeck suggested that the difference among the three types lies in the subject of their focus, with the implicative ad focusing on self,

the assaultive ad on the other, and the comparative ad on both, such that the first (implicative ad) works on the assumption that voters need information to determine what candidate most closely aligns with themselves, personally and politically; the second (assaultive ad) works on the assumption that voters mark their ballots against rather than for certain candidates; and the third (comparative ad) works on the assumption that voters actively compare contenders in the decision-making process.

In a study conducted by Kaid and Boydston (1987) of the impact of negative political advertising, 428 civic group members were exposed to photographic replications of four National Conservative Political Action Committee newspaper advertisements and one television advertisement designed to discredit an Oklahoma politician.

Exposure to the five advertisements produced a number of interesting results, among which were the following: (a) respondents perceived the candidate as less qualified, honest, serious, sincere, successful, conservative, and less of a saver; (b) two of the newspaper's advertisements (one dissociating the candidate from President Reagan's economic policies and the other accusing the candidate of being two-faced in opposing outside groups such as the PAC group involved while accepting out-of-state donor funds) did not produce significant effects; (c) the newspaper advertisement associating the candidate with House Speaker O'Neill had a

particularly negative effect on the politician in question; (d) the newspaper advertisement labeling the targeted politician as unrepresentative of the voters and portraying the district television media as conspiring to prevent groups such as the PAC involved from publicizing negative information about the candidate produced both negative and positive effects on perceptions of the politician's attributes; (e) the newspaper advertisement attacking the politician for his opposition toward President Reagan's economic policies yielded perceptions of the candidate as less conservative but more friendly than before exposure; (f) Republicans were most affected by the newspaper advertisement associating the candidate's ideologies with those of House Speaker O'Neill and the one dissociating him from Reagan's economic policies, while the Democrats were most swayed by the media conspiracy newspaper advertisement; (g) Republicans were more significantly affected by the advertisements than Democrats, although the latter group had a more negative perception of the candidate after exposure, suggesting that such advertisements can greatly affect members of the opposition party in the intended direction, but also can to a lesser extent affect partisans similarly.

In an analysis of 95 political advertisements employed in the 1984 North Carolina Senate race between Jesse Helms and Jim Hunt, Louden (1987) concluded that: (a) the instantaneity of candidate advertisements provides a campaign

the means to "construct" an agenda relatively free from press oversight and gatekeeping functions through a dialogue between competing elements; (b) negative advertisements may act to efficiently build perceptions of opponent's negatives while increasing perceptions of the source's positives, except when the advertisements are viewed as unfair, creating a backlash and becoming counterproductive; (c) if a candidate employs both positive and negative advertisements in his campaign, his "persona" must remain consistent; (d) the risk of backlash or inadvertent association is reduced when the source of the accusations in a negative advertisement is absent in the advertisement; and (e) negative advertisements work when their content is consistent with voter beliefs or generally agreed upon "facts."

Length of Commercials

Sheinkopf and O'Keefe (1973) investigated length of political candidate advertising effects in the context of the 1972 presidential election through a telephone survey of 743 voters in central Florida. They found that media strategy, through imposition of various commercial lengths, was not the critical factor, but rather that specific commercial content, as a means to acquire information about the candidates, was the most important consideration. In an examination of 1972 gubernatorial campaign commercials, Kaid and Sanders (1978) discovered that five-minute

commercials were associated with higher candidate evaluations than were 60-second ones and that content recall of commercials bore no relationship to commercial length.

Issue vs. Image Content

Meyer and Donohue (1973) tested student perceptions of political candidate advertisement spots of 30 seconds or less transmitted over the radio for four candidates from the 1972 presidential campaign (Kennedy, Humphrey, Lindsay, Nixon) on three issues: Vietnam, unemployment, and U.S. policies for Latin America. Generally speaking, the researchers found advertisements attributed to high credible sources result in more inaccurate perceptions than advertisements associated with low credible sources. The researchers also found that voters tend to be more careful in listening to advertisements of their less favored candidates and tend to read positive elements into the advertisements of those candidates they favor. A link was demonstrated between misperceptions of the content of candidate advertisements and the tendency to agree or disagree with statements attributed to them, agreeing more with statements from commercials of high credible sources.

In a follow-up study, Donohue (1973-1974) examined the impact of viewer predispositions toward four 1972 presidential candidates (Muskie, Kennedy, Humphrey, and Wallace) on their perception of candidate television commercials. Stimulus

material was developed by the researcher. Among his findings were that (a) voters who favor a candidate tend to project more of their own beliefs into his commercials when the issues involved are considered to be important; (b) voters perceive and agree with statements from commercials for high and low credible sources partly on the basis of content salience; (c) candidates assigned high credibility tend to produce more acceptance of receiver misperceptions on highly salient issues, while low credibility candidates are often associated with greater acceptance of receiver misperceptions when the issues involved are of low salience.

O'Keefe and Sheinkopf (1974) conducted telephone interviews just prior to the 1972 presidential election to ascertain the value individuals attach to political advertisements in making their voting decisions. Results of the study indicated that the interviewees made little effort to avoid the commercials from either party, although some Nixon supporters avoided McGovern commercials and some supporters from both camps ignored the commercials from their own party. Additionally, the respondents reported gaining little significant information from the commercials; only 5% of the respondents indicated that they thought of the advertisements as an issue information source. As respondents were able to name more issues in the campaign, the less their reliance on image information seemed to emerge. Respondents who could name only one campaign issue clearly

relied more on image information than on issue information. This study gave credence to the argument that candidate commercials serve primarily an image related communicative function.

Baskin (1976) conducted image assessments for three Democratic candidates and three Republican candidates participating in 1974 state campaign races, concluding that candidate image is predominantly a stimulus-determined phenomenon and that candidate advertising is a powerful campaign tool, particularly for relatively unknown candidates. In an investigation of candidate commercials for 1972 gubernatorial contenders, Kaid and Sanders (1978) found issue-oriented commercials generated higher candidate evaluations, while image-oriented commercials produced greater recall of content.

Joslyn (1980) performed an in-depth examination of 156 television political advertisements emanating from various presidential, gubernatorial, senatorial, and congressional campaigns. While issue-oriented commercials were found to be prevalent, very few of them revealed a specific issue position for a candidate; in fact, 19% revealed nothing about the candidate's position on the issue and another 38% revealed only vague information in this regard. The second most prevalent candidate advertisement focused on qualities of the candidate, most specifically his leadership, honesty, concern, responsiveness,

strength, determination, perseverence, vigor, and purpose. The third most prevalent advertisement focused upon associating the candidates with concerns of certain groups and the fourth or least prevalent type centered on partisan information.

Kaid (1982) reported that image-oriented commercials resulted in significantly higher political candidate name recognition than did issue-oriented commercials in an immediate recall situation and to some extent in a follow up.

Utilizing researcher generated commercials, Meadow and Sigelman (1982) found that the inclusion of a fast-paced, image-oriented spot could enhance the evaluation of a candidate as a leader and even influence support for his candidacy, but it could not contribute to evaluations of his warmth, humaneness, credibility, or attractiveness. In contrast, issue-oriented commercials were found to enhance the candidate's perceived warmth and leadership. Through an analysis of gubernatorial campaign commercials, Karam (1982) concluded that the negative image projected by a candidate can have a worse effect on the campaign than a positive one.

Garramone (1983) varied motivational conditions and channel conditions for subjects to determine the effects of a 1980 Libertarian candidate spot. Those subjects charged with attending to issue information were more likely to learn and more confident in their learning than their counterparts.

In contrast, those subjects asked to attend to image information had greater confidence in their recall of video information. No differences were found on the basis of channel condition.

Latimer (1984) conducted an analysis of issue and image content in the Alabama 1982 state senate race print media advertisements of 42 candidates and for candidates in the statewide contests. Winning incumbents incorporated personalized information heavily in their political advertisements. Winning challengers in state senate races had more policy-oriented messages in their advertisements than did their incumbent opponents. Policy messages were stronger in competitive senate contests than in non-competitive senate contests. Finally, personality content was found to be more prevalent than policy content and was found to be highly conducive to stimulating voters.

Through participant observation in a 1982 gubernatorial campaign, Rudd (1986) examined the use of issue commercials in developing the image of a candidate. In this particular case, a series of six issue television commercials was developed to build a positive image for the candidate in three areas: basic human and social values, personality, and leadership.

Using 140 30-second and 60-second spots from the 1980 presidential primary campaign, Shyles (1986) made an attempt to define audio-visual variables in political commercials

associated with image and issue orientations. Issue-oriented spots were found to be those commercials involving formally dressed candidates talking directly to the camera, typifying a "straightforward approach." In contrast, image-oriented spots were found to be those commercials featuring stills of candidates augmented by testimonials of famous persons and citizens, comparative fast cutting, and the voices of announcers, assembled into a "slickly packaged" product.

On the basis of a study of political advertisements of two fictitious candidates, Cundy (1986) concluded that such advertisements may have the greatest effect upon candidate image perceptions early in a campaign where the candidate is not well known, in primaries when the party identification cue may be absent, and in lower level races where the media does not extensively cover the candidates.

In a study of information processing and candidate image formation, Garramone (1986) exposed student subjects to videotape recordings of four Roger Hedgecock commercials in a mayoral race. Among her conclusions were that: (a) image-motivated viewers utilize more general concepts in processing information about the candidates than do issue-motivated viewers; (b) exposure to image-oriented commercials results in more visual information processing and more inference processing than does exposure to issue-oriented commercials; (c) exposure to issue-oriented commercials

produces a more positive candidate image than does exposure to image-oriented commercials but only when the receiver participates in a high degree of inference or image information processing.

In a study of the 1980 presidential primary campaign commercials, Shyles (1984) found that most image references focused on candidate experience and competence. Democratic spots employed altruism considerably more frequently than did Republican ones. The Republicans, in contrast, made considerably more reference to competence than did the Democrats. The Democrats made more reference to strength than did their counterparts; likewise, the Democrats more frequently made mention of experience than did the Republicans. For both parties, references to experience, leadership, and competence accounted for over 55% of all image references.

Shyles (1987) examined image references in the advertisements for ten candidates in the 1984 presidential primary and general election campaigns. Among his findings were that: (a) the majority of these references on behalf of candidates involved characteristics of competence, experience, honesty, and leadership (80% of those coded); (b) for none of the candidates did the characteristics of competence and experience account for less than 40% of the total image mentions; (c) among the major primary candidates, the Glenn spots relied most heavily on personality traits, the Mondale spots on altruism, and the Hart spots on

honesty; (d) of the two general election contenders, the Reagan spots emphasized his experience, competence, and leadership, while the Mondale spots concentrated on his competence, experience, and altruism.

In a study of senatorial campaign advertisements, Johnston (1986) found that subjects consistently encoded either high image, high issue, or moderate image and issue responses to two candidate commercials. On the basis of these results, the researcher concluded that individuals possess a predisposition to process image or issue data, irrespective of commercial content.

Level of Election and Political Party

Prisuta (1970) noted in a study of candidate broadcasting advertising in a Michigan legislature campaign that: (a) broadcast usage was more prevalent among rural candidates; (b) the larger, more complex, and more organized the campaign the greater the likelihood that the candidate employed broadcast advertising; and (c) the more spent by a candidate on broadcasting the more likely the campaign was to be successful. The latter finding is supported in a study by Wanat (1974) of primary congressional election campaigns.

Joslyn (1980) demonstrated that gubernatorial candidate advertising campaigns tend to concentrate on "old style" political information, relying more on partisan

identifications, references to candidate qualities, and less on issue positions and concerns. Senatorial advertising campaigns tend to be the less partisan in nature than either presidential or gubernatorial advertising campaigns. Furthermore, Democrats tend to transmit more group-referent information and Republicans are more likely to focus on issues and candidate qualities but are slightly more likely to offer marginal partisan content in their advertisements.

Viewer Variables

Sheinkopf, Atkin and Bowen (1972) reported that political candidate advertisements stimulate communication among campaign workers. For lower-level workers, the commercials of the candidate they represent provide them valuable information for further persuasive activity, while for campaign workers in leadership positions, this is the case for the opponent's commercials. In a study of color and black-and-white paid political advertising utilizing researcher generated commercial stimuli, Donohue (1973) noted that utilization of color in political commercials affected females more positively than males in most respects, but increased the perceptions of both sexes in regard to aesthetic and qualitative value judgments of these stimuli. Atkin, Bowen, Nayman and Sheinkopf (1973) found that voters who attended to political commercials to gain information tended to learn more about candidates than those who viewed

these commercials but could not avoid doing so.

In a study comparing the relative effects of political campaign commercials and television news in changing voter beliefs in the context of the 1972 presidential election, McClure and Patterson (1974) noted that: (a) moderate-interest voters concentrated on the most obscure of the commercial belief messages; (b) high television exposure resulted in greater information gain for low-interest voters than for high-interest voters, presumably due to difference in exposure to other media sources; (c) on the average, moderate-interest voters gained more information from high television exposure than did low-interest voters. In a laboratory experiment, Rothschild and Ray (1974) demonstrated a clear relationship between a low level of voter involvement and increased political advertising effects.

Becker and Doolittle (1975) found a curvilinear relationship between exposure and affect, such that a moderate level of exposure to candidate commercials resulted in a higher affective evaluation of candidates than either high or low exposure, suggesting a satiation effect for the redundant stimuli. This was also the case for information-seeking behavior about the candidates. Atkin and Heald (1976) found a direct relationship between voter information-seeking interest and political advertising message recall. In the context of the 1972 presidential campaign, Surlin and Gordon (1976) found that lower socio-economic status

voters, lower educated voters, and older voters were less likely to be exposed to political advertising and retain political information.

Atkin (1977) examined the political socialization of children in the third through sixth grades through campaign advertising and newscasts in connection with the 1976 presidential election. Results of the study indicated that periodic candidate advertising generates both cognitive and affective impact among young viewers. Moderate to strong relationships were found between viewing of political commercials and liking of the candidates or knowledge about them.

In a test of the effects of campaign commercials as a function of respondent political activity in the context of a mayoral election, Mulder (1979) found that all indices of political change (voting intention, relative candidate evaluation, evaluation of the mayor's age, opinions on a school issue, political corruption, and government efficiency) correlated significantly with exposure to candidate television advertisements. More specifically, however, the results indicated voting intention and candidate evaluation were more resistant to the influence of the commercials than were the indices relating to specific campaign issues. In addition, the researcher found that correlations between political change and candidate advertising did not vary as a function of three levels of voter political involvement.

In a study of the impact of candidate advertising on voting defections, Joslyn (1981) found that: (a) the two most consistently important variables among those studied in predicting voter defections were partisan identification strength and the candidate incumbency status; and (b) exposure to or the partisan balance of broadcast advertisements was the third most important criterion in the analysis, with a direct relationship between candidate advertisement purchasing behavior and party identifier defections. The researcher, however, was quick to note the potential limitation of the advertising exposure measure chosen for the study, being inferred from advertising expenditures in four of the five campaigns examined.

Garramone (1984) found that highly politically involved voters are more likely to be influenced negatively regarding the target of a negative political advertisement than are less politically involved voters; this was found to be particularly the case for voters favoring neither of two candidates and for highly educated voters. Garramone and Smith (1984) demonstrated that (a) the more a viewer identifies with the political party attacking a candidate through a commercial, the greater the perceived trustworthiness of the sponsor and the more positively evaluated the commercial; and (b) voters highly dependent upon political commercials perceive independent sponsorship of them as more trustworthy than other types of sponsorship

(party or candidate).

Historical Analyses of Candidate Advertisements

A number of in-depth content analyses of candidate advertisements in specific political campaigns have been conducted. Analyses of candidate advertising across the 1952-1984 presidential campaigns have been the focus of two books (Diamond & Bates, 1984; Jamieson, 1984). Additionally, Devlin (1986) provided another comprehensive review of televised advertisements during this period, while Humke, Schmitt and Grupp (1975) looked at candidate newspaper advertisements from the 1932-1960 campaigns.

The majority of the historical content analyses focus on single presidential campaigns and the greatest proportion of these is on the 1972, 1980, and 1984 races. Studies of single presidential campaigns include: (a) 1956--Wood, 1985; (b) 1960--Mullen, 1963b; (c) 1964--Mullen, 1968; (d) 1972--Buss and Hofstetter, 1976; Devlin, 1973-74; Hofstetter and Zukin, 1979; (e) 1976--Devlin, 1977; (f) 1980--Devlin, 1981; Devlin, 1982; Shyles, 1983; and (g) 1984--Devlin, 1985; Fogo, 1987; Jenks, 1987; Whitlock, 1986. In-depth content analyses of candidate advertising in other political races, as opposed to specific variable analytic studies, are more rare in the literature; examples include content analyses of a congressional race (Gotliffe, 1985) or comparisons between various levels of races (Bowers, 1972a; 1972b; Mullen, 1963a).

Devlin (1986) developed a typology of televised political candidate advertisements along historical lines in accordance with presidential campaigns. The 1952 and 1956 campaigns featured what he called "primitive ads" with the "Eisenhower Answers America," "Man from Abilene," and "Man from Libertyville" commercials. The 1960 campaign offered the "talking head" spot with Kennedy and Nixon speaking directly to the camera, to focus the electorate on certain issues. The 1964 campaign witnessed the emergence of the "negative ad" with the "Daisy Girl" spot. The 1968 campaign offered the first use of color in candidate commercials. The 1972 campaign featured the use of production spots (e.g., five-minute travelogues of Nixon's trips to China and Russia) and the use of cinema verité showing McGovern talking with voters in real life settings. Devlin described the 1976 campaign as that of the "changing spot," with a multiplicity of advertisements, with emphasis shifting, the personable candidate (Carter) becoming more presidential and the incumbent candidate (Ford) becoming more personable as the advertisements progressed. The 1980 campaign, according to Devlin, was uniquely characterized by Reagan documentary advertisements, testimonial advertisements, and independently sponsored advertisements. Devlin also pointed to the use of "man-in-the-street" advertisements in both the 1976 and 1980 presidential campaigns. In terms of commercial length, Devlin noted

that the emphasis in the 1952-1968 presidential campaigns was on 20- or 60-second spots, in the 1972 and 1976 campaigns it was on 4-minute and 20-second spots, and in the 1980 and 1984 campaigns it was on the 30-second spot.

Methods of Studying Political Advertisements

The majority of studies reviewed for this paper from the literature pertaining to political candidate campaign advertising has focused upon hypo-deductive research examining commercial content variables, viewer variables, or media variables. A more recent thrust has been upon studying candidate advertising through rhetorical approaches.

Larson (1982) examined the potential of rhetorically-based methods in studying candidate commercials and concluded that such studies have likely not surfaced in the literature because of a lack of traditional discursive formats in political candidate advertisements and "the multitude of 'languages' which are presenting at least part of the overall message to the viewer-voter (for example, the 'languages' of camera angle and movements, or special effects)" (pp. 533-534) not typically considered rhetorical in nature. Larson argued that two models of political advertising could make rhetorical analysis of them possible: (a) a "transportation model," focusing upon the conveyance of information from source to receiver and retrieved at the time of a voting decision and compared with other inputs,

which could be analyzed with critical tools employing reasoning or evidence for evaluation; and (b) the "evoked recall model," focusing upon audience/message relationships, specifically on what the audience creates out of various advertising message components, which could be critically examined through metaphorical analysis or dramatistic analysis.

Larson (1984) followed this piece with a metaphorical analysis of four 1984 presidential primary and general election campaign commercials utilizing the evoked recall model. Several other rhetorical studies on 1984 campaign commercials have emerged in the literature. In an analysis of Reagan, Mondale, and Hart commercials from the 1984 presidential primary campaigns of the Republican and Democratic parties, Whitlock (1986) examined the use of rhetorical visions emphasizing particular American myths and underlying mastermyths in them. Nimmo and Felsberg (1986) examined the deep structure of commercials employed in a 1978 gubernatorial race to ascertain the hidden myths encased in the advertisements. Fogo (1987) conducted an examination of Reagan and Mondale commercials in terms of their contrasting use of traditional "work ethic" appeals as a means to present their economic visions. Similarly, Jenks (1987) investigated the "image of America" created by Reagan and Mondale in their commercials through the use of the "implied author" and "implied audience" as a means

for analysis. Smith and Bellamy (1987) executed an examination of 1980 state and national election campaign commercials through the incorporation of Burkean story frames and Brummett's metaphorical method of anecdotal analysis, noting identification strategies tying the narratives together to evoke certain audience responses to creations of political realities.

Mansfield and Hale (1986) advocate the use of Q-methodology in studying campaign commercials to make the viewer of these commercials the center of the investigation in order to gain viewer assessments about political commercials as opposed to researcher imposed interpretations. Louden (1985) argued for the application of an information-processing model to study voter involvement, commercial format characteristics, and negative political spots through examining attentional focus, information selection, interpretation, and expectation generation and activation.

Discussion

The purpose of this paper has been to examine the research literature on political candidate campaign advertising. The majority of this literature has entailed the examination of such advertisements within the context of a particular election as a means to document their content or determine their effects on voter behavior. Few studies have been conducted across election campaigns. Presidential advertising receiving the most empirical attention has been

associated with the 1972, 1980, and 1984 campaigns. A number of studies have also examined gubernatorial, senatorial, and congressional campaigns; limited research is available which looks across election levels or looks at primary versus general election campaigns. Probably the controversy which has received the most attention in this literature has been the issue versus image orientation of these advertisements.

On the basis of this literature review, the following recommendations for future research can be advocated: (a) more comparative research across election campaigns; (b) more research examining incumbents versus challengers; (c) in concert with the emergence of more female candidates, more research on specific appeals utilized; (d) research on viewer saturation levels as campaigns progress; (e) issue-image orientation studies as a function of campaign stages utilizing perhaps the Diamond and Bates typology of advertisements (see, for example, Payne, Baukus & Schmidt, 1985, in a study of the argument spot); (f) research on issue-image orientations in advertisements in campaigns with and without candidate debates; (g) research on single issue campaigns versus multiple issue campaigns; (h) more research on local election campaigns, where there is less money available for candidate advertising; (i) more research on primary versus general election campaign advertisements; and (j) more research on candidate advertisements utilizing rhetorical perspectives and critical methods.

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